

**FAIRFAX COUNTY ATHLETIC COUNCIL
MINUTES**

February 16, 2005

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Harold Leff, Hunter Mill District
Barbara R. Lowrey, Mason District
Stephen McLaughlin, Providence District
Roger Sims, Springfield District
David Lacey, Sully District
Elizabeth T. Bradsher, Member-At-Large
Jeffrey E. Stein, Town of Clifton
Jerry Carter, Town of Herndon
Sam Althoff, Town of Vienna
Rob Hahne, Fairfax County Baseball Council
Robert L. Panek, Fairfax County Girls' Fast Pitch Softball
Carl Coan, Fairfax County Adult Softball Council
Mark Meana, Fairfax County Football Board of Commissioners
Deborah B. Honaker, Fairfax County Soccer Advisory Council

COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES

George Lovelace, Fairfax County Park Authority
Brian Daly, Fairfax County Park Authority
Paul Jansen, Fairfax County School Board
Patricia Franckewitz, Department of Community and Recreation Services
Karen Avvisato, Department of Community and Recreation Services
Jesse Ellis, Department of Community and Recreation Services
Ashlee Currie, Department of Community and Recreation Services

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Joseph E. Jozefczyk, Braddock District
Roger Smith, Dranesville District
Lula Bauer, Lee District
Wesley M. Viilo, Jr., Mount Vernon District
J. Marcelo Gangotena, Diversity-At-Large
Tom Moore, Fairfax County Youth Basketball Council
Bill Harvey, Fairfax County Lacrosse Council
Tricia Johnson, Fairfax County Volleyball Council
Jacqueline Y. Stephens, Fairfax County Women's Sports Programs

GUESTS:

Lauren Burns, Holiday Inn Tyson's
Rose Orvac, Fairfax Adult Softball
Tom Orvac, Fairfax Adult Softball
John Pitts, Fairfax County Park Authority
Robert Betsold, Fairfax County Park Authority

Meeting Opening – The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Stephen McLaughlin. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Citizens to Address Council

Lauren Burns of the Holiday Inn Tyson's presented the hotel's discounted team packages. She will be at the Sports Forum as a vendor.

Presentations to the Council

Presentation #1: Laurel Hill Development: John Pitts, Fairfax County Park Authority

FPCA will favor proposals that provide for the greatest public benefit for active recreation. They will accept and fund as many proposals as possible. Mr. Pitts explained that FPCA wants to see community support for proposals in the form of partnerships with and among sports organizations. Rob Hahne asked if the Council could submit a recommendation. While they could, most organizations submitting recommendations plan to submit full proposals.

Additionally, while the RFP indicates a preference for rectangular field development on the site, the FPCA will consider any proposal based on its benefit to the community. Mr. Robert Betsold stated that two of the strongest proposals so far (submitted by the Fairfax Youth Sports Foundation and the Laurel Hill Sports Foundation) included both rectangular and diamond fields. Roger Sims stated that there should be a balanced approach to fields. Additional infrastructure needed includes parking and transportation access to the recreation area.

There has been no determination yet as to who will schedule the fields or when they would be available. Roger Sims indicated that a potential "double fee" caused by scheduling fees for Laurel Hill in addition to those for CRS-scheduled fields could be dangerous. George Lovelace explained that the Sportsplex likely will be modeled on the Montgomery County SoccerPlex, so there is the expectation that teams will have to "pay to play." Karen Avvisato reminded the Council that scheduling at Laurel Hill would be counted against an organization's allocation. Tournament usage likely would not be restricted to county residents. Rob Hahne suggested that the final agreement should include time available to the community at large for scheduling.

George Lovelace indicated that FPCA would keep the Council updated.

Presentation #2: FCPS Comprehensive Plan Amendment Work Group: Roger Sims, Sandra Stallman, FPCA

Roger Sims, who was the Council representative on the work group, stated that the amendments to the comprehensive plan balanced active recreation, passive recreation, and environmental demands fairly and recommended that the Council support the changes.

Ms. Stallman explained that the comprehensive plan has two main components: (1) the policy plan, which outlines county goals, policies, and objectives related to growth, and (2) area plans, which are site-specific plans for individual parks that fit within Parks' master plans. The amendments are being proposed to the parks and recreation section of the policy plan, which is outdated. The main amendment proposes reducing the nine classifications of parks to four: local, district, county, and resource. In general, there would be an expectation that athletic fields at district and county parks would be lit, and may be lit at local parks. Resource parks might have athletic fields. The revision would provide more flexibility for determining park use, as the current system is too specific. FCPA would reclassify parks as they redo Parks' area plans. These classifications will not affect Parks' master plans, which still determine most park design for FCPA. Steve McLaughlin explained that the new flexibility is a new "flexibility for the community, not for FCPA." Barbara Lowrey recommended that Council members read the proposed changes before engaging in further discussion.

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the plan next Thursday, February 24, at 8:15 p.m. They will then make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors, who will hold a public hearing on the plan on Monday, March 21, at 4:00 p.m.

Administrative Items

On motion, the Council approved the minutes from the December 15, 2004, meeting.

Items Presented

Application Fee Committee: Patricia Franckewitz, CRS

The committee has reviewed statistical information prepared by CRS and developed criteria for a survey to assess the impact of the fee on sports organizations. The survey is currently online and available for organizations' sports contacts to complete. The committee will meet to review the results of the survey and will report to the Council in March before submitting its report to the Board of Supervisors.

Protecting Our Fields (Walk-on Use) Committee: Patricia Franckewitz, CRS

The committee is developing recommendations for enforcement, outreach/education, and field design. They are currently formulating a final report to be made to the Board of Supervisors in March. FCPA and FCPS also are represented on this committee.

Field Maintenance Committee: Patricia Franckewitz, CRS

CRS is putting together recommendations for regular maintenance standards on softball and 90-foot baseball fields. The recommendations, developed with input from FCPA, FCPS, and the softball and baseball communities, will be presented to the Board of Supervisors in March.

CRS-FCPS-FCPA Memorandum of Understanding Committee: Patricia Franckewitz, CRS

This committee, composed of representatives from CRS, FCPA, and FCPS, is facing several issues. The Board of Supervisors and School Board were updated on the committee's progress last week. They will present a final agreement to the Board of Supervisors by mid-April in time for the BOS to consider their annual transfer of funds to FCPS.

Information – Fairfax County Park Authority: Brian Daly and George Lovelace, FCPA

Mr. Daly informed the Council that the FCPA had extended the deadline to February 28 for public comment on their proposed fee adjustments. Steve McLaughlin suggested that Council members make comments as individuals or as athletic organizations; that the FCAC would not comment.

George Lovelace informed the Council that the FCPA 2005 – 2009 Project Development Schedule is online at the FCPA website.

Information – Fairfax County School Board: Paul Jansen, FCPS

Mr. Jansen thanked the baseball community for its patience and flexibility with the recent changes in the availability of FCPS 90-foot fields. Roger Sims indicated that the switch to Bermuda grass at several high school fields would require more maintenance than is currently provided. Mr. Sims also requested better coordination of 90-foot field availability so that too many schools in one region are not closed during the same season. Mr. Jansen agreed and stated that the issue would be addressed.

Information – Community and Recreation Services: Patricia Franckewitz, Director, CRS

Ms. Franckewitz informed the Council of the County Gang Summit on Friday, February 25, and recommended that Council members attend. Over 200 people are currently registered. Registration information is available on the county website.

David Lacey asked about the status of middle school after-school programs. Ms. Franckewitz and Mr. Jansen indicated that some schools will be moving to five-day programs and may be taken off-line for community use. Money for after-school programming comes from the Board of Supervisors, the School Board, and federal Safe and Drug Free Youth funding. The School Board is attempting to better coordinate the use of these funds, but each school's program likely will be unique to best address parent, student, and community needs and concerns.

Ms. Franckewitz also informed the Council that Thursday would be the first meeting on the FCPS community school concept. Graham Road Elementary will be the next pilot community school. This may have an impact on use, as Crestwood Elementary had restricted community use of its gyms when it became a community school.

New Business


FCPA Lighted Field Policy: David Lacey

Mr. Lacey asked the Council to consider recommending a change to the FCPA policy restricting the use of lights to games only. Given the need for field space, the fact that many organizations pay for the installation of lights, and the lack of a similar policy for FCPS fields, Mr. Lacey said he would draft a recommendation to the Park Board that the Council could consider in March. Brian Daly stated that the current policy is available on the FCPA website (navigate to "Policy Manual," then to Policy #402). Mr. Daly also stated that Tim White has previously urged the Park Board to change the policy and that FCPA staff could support the recommendation and encourage FCAC action on the issue.

Adjournment

On motion, the meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Stephen McLaughlin".

Stephen McLaughlin
Chairman